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NEWSLETTER
September 1971

This issue of the Australian U.F.O. Bulletin begins with a paper presented to the 134th Meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science on 27th December, 1969 by the late Professor James E. McDonald who was one of the top atmospheric scientists in the United States.

Copies of this bulletin will be posted to key Newsmen, Editors and Broadcasters throughout Australia.

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- . Tapes of the entire proceedings of the Symposium .
- . on Unidentified Flying Objects held by the AAAS .
- . are available at \$3.50 per tape (6 tapes in all). .
- . Orders may be placed with The Secretary, .
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AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE, 134th MEETING

Subject SCIENCE IN DEFAULT:

22 Years of Inadequate UFO Investigations.

Author James E. McDonald, Professor of Atmospheric Sciences.

Address The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A.

Time 9:00 a.m., December 27, 1969.

Place Sheraton Plaza Ballroom.

Program General Symposium, Unidentified Flying Objects.

Convention

Address Sheraton Plaza Hotel.

No scientifically adequate investigation of the UFO problem has been carried out during the entire 22 years that have now passed since the first extensive wave of sightings of unidentified aerial objects in the summer of 1947. Despite continued public interest, and despite frequent expressions of public concern, only quite superficial examinations of the steadily growing body of unexplained UFO reports from credible witnesses have been conducted in this country or abroad. The latter point is highly relevant, since all evidence now points to the fact that UFO sightings exhibit similar characteristics throughout the world.

Charging inadequacy of all past UFO investigations, I speak

not only from a background of close study of the past investigations, but also from a background of three years of rather detailed personal research, involving interviews with over five hundred witnesses in selected UFO cases, chiefly in the U.S. In my opinion, the UFO problem, far from being the nonsense problem that it has often been labeled by many scientists, constitutes a problem of extraordinary scientific interest.

The grave difficulty with essentially all past UFO studies has been that they were either devoid of any substantial scientific content, or else have lost their way amidst the relatively large noise-content that tends to obscure the real signal in the UFO reports. The presence of a percentually large number of reports of misidentified natural or technological phenomena (planets, meteors, and aircraft, above all) is not surprising, given all the circumstances surrounding the UFO problem. Yet such understandable and usually easily recognized instances of misidentification have all too often been seized upon as a sufficient explanation for all UFO reports, while the residue of far more significant reports (numbering now of order one thousand) are ignored. I believe Science is in default for having failed to mount any truly adequate studies of this problem, a problem that has aroused such strong and widespread public concern during the past two decades. Unfortunately, the present climate of thinking, above all since release of the latest of a long series of inadequate studies, namely, that conducted under the direction of Dr. E. U. Condon at the University of Colorado, will make it very difficult to secure any new and more thorough investigations, yet my own examination of the problem forces me to call for just such new studies. I am enough of a realist to sense that, unless the present AAAS UFO Symposium succeeds in making the scientific community aware of the seriousness of the UFO problem, little immediate response to any call for new investigation is likely to appear.

In fact, the over-all public and scientific response to the UFO phenomena is itself a matter of substantial scientific interest, above all in its social-psychological aspects. Prior to my own investigations, I would never have imagined the widespread reluctance to report an unusual and seemingly inexplicable event, yet that reluctance, and the attendant reluctance of scientists to exhibit serious interest in the phenomena in question, are quite general. One regrettable result is the fact that the most credible of UFO witnesses are often those most reluctant to come forward with a report of the event they have witnessed. A second regrettable result is that only a very small number of scientists have taken the time and trouble to search out the really puzzling reports that tend to be diluted out by the much larger number of trivial and non-significant UFO reports. The net result is that there still exists no general scientific recognition of the scope and nature of the UFO problem.

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Within the federal government, official responsibility for UFO investigations has rested with the Air Force since early 1948. Unidentified aerial objects quite naturally fall within the area of Air Force concern, so this assignment of responsibility was basically reasonable. However, once it became clear (early 1949) that UFO reports did not seem to involve advanced aircraft of some hostile foreign power, Air Force interest subsided to relatively low levels, marked, however, by occasional temporary resurgence of interest following large waves of UFO reports, such as that of 1952, or 1957, or 1965.

A most unfortunate pattern of press reporting developed by about 1953, in which the Air Force would assert that they had found no evidence of anything "defying explanation in terms of present-day science and technology" in their growing files of UFO reports. These statements to the public would have done little harm had they not been coupled systematically to press statements asserting that "the best scientific facilities available to the U.S. Air Force" had been and were being brought to bear on the UFO question. The

assurances that substantial scientific competence was involved in Air Force UFO investigations have, I submit, had seriously deleterious scientific effects. Scientists who might otherwise have done enough checking to see that a substantial scientific puzzle lay in the UFO area were misled by these assurances into thinking that capable scientists had already done adequate study and found nothing. My own extensive checks have revealed so slight a total amount of scientific competence in two decades of Air Force-supported investigations that I can only regard the repeated asseverations of solid scientific study of the UFO problem as the single most serious obstacle that the Air Force has put in the way of progress towards elucidation of the matter.

I do not believe, let me stress, that this has been part of some top-secret coverup of extensive investigations by Air Force or security agencies; I have found no substantial basis for accepting that theory of why the Air Force has so long failed to respond appropriately to the many significant and scientifically intriguing UFO reports coming from within its own ranks. Briefly, I see grand foulup but not grand coverup. Although numerous instances could be cited wherein Air Force spokesmen failed to release anything like complete details of UFO reports, and although this has had the regrettable consequence of denying scientists at large even a dim notion of the almost incredible nature of some of the more impressive Air Force-related UFO reports, I still feel that the most grievous fault of 22 years of Air Force handling of the UFO problem has consisted of their repeated public assertions that they had substantial scientific competence on the job.

Close examination of the level of investigation and the level of scientific analysis involved in Project Sign (1948-9), Project Grudge (1949-52), and project Bluebook (1953 to date), reveals that these were, viewed scientifically, almost meaningless investigations. Even during occasional periods (e.g., 1952) characterized by fairly active investigation of UFO cases, there was still such slight scientific expertise involved that there was never any real chance that the puzzling phenomena encountered in the most significant UFO cases would be elucidated. Furthermore, the panels, consultants, contractual studies, etc., that the Air Force has had working on the UFO problem over the past 22 years have, with essentially no exception, brought almost negligible scientific scrutiny into the picture. Illustrative examples will be given.

The Condon Report, released in January, 1968, after about two years of Air Force-supported study is, in my opinion, quite inadequate. The sheer bulk of the Report, and the inclusion of much that can only be viewed as "scientific padding", cannot conceal from anyone who studies it closely the salient point that it represents an examination of only a tiny fraction of the most puzzling UFO reports of the past two decades, and that its level of scientific argumentation is wholly unsatisfactory. Furthermore, of the roughly 90 cases that it specifically confronts, over 30 are conceded to be unexplained. With so large a fraction of unexplained cases (out of a sample that is by no means limited only to the truly puzzling cases, but includes an objectionably large number of obviously trivial cases), it is far from clear how Dr. Condon felt justified in concluding that the study indicated "that further extensive study of UFOs probably cannot be justified in the expectation that Science will be advanced thereby."

I shall cite a number of specific examples of cases from the Condon Report which I regard as entirely inadequately investigated and reported. One at Kirtland AFB, November 4, 1957, involved observations of a wingless egg-shaped object that was observed hovering about a minute over the field prior to departure at a climb rate which was described to me as faster than that of any known jets, then or now. The principal witnesses in this case were precisely the type of witnesses whose accounts warrant closest attention, since they were CAA tower observers who watched the UFO from the CAA tower with binoculars. Yet, when I located these two men in the course of my own check of cases from the Condon Report, I found that neither of them had even been contacted by members of

the University of Colorado project! Both men were fully satisfied that they had been viewing a device with performance characteristics well beyond anything in present or foreseeable aeronautical technology. The two men gave me descriptions that were mutually consistent and that fit closely the testimony given on November 6, 1957, when they were interrogated by an Air Force investigator. The Condon Report attempts to explain this case as a light-aircraft that lost its way, came into the field area, and then left. This kind of explanation runs through the whole Condon Report, yet is wholly incapable of explaining the details of sightings such as that of the Kirtland AFB incident. Other illustrative instances in which the investigations summarized in the Condon Report exhibit glaring deficiencies will be cited. I suggest that there are enough significant unexplainable UFO reports just within the Condon Report itself to document the need for a greatly increased level of scientific study of UFOs.

That a panel of the National Academy of Sciences could endorse this study is to me disturbing. I find no evidence that the Academy panel did any independent checking of its own; and none of that 11-man panel had any significant prior investigative experience in this area, to my knowledge. I believe that this sort of Academy endorsement must be criticized; it hurts Science in the long run, and I fear that this particular instance will ultimately prove an embarrassment to the National Academy of Sciences.

The Condon Report and its Academy endorsement have exerted a highly negative influence on clarification of the long-standing UFO problem; so much, in fact, that it seems almost pointless to now call for new and more extensive UFO investigations. Yet the latter are precisely what are needed to bring out into full light of scientific inquiry a phenomenon that could well constitute one of the greatest scientific problems of our times.

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Some examples of UFO cases conceded to be unexplainable in the Condon Report and containing features of particularly strong scientific interest: Utica, N.Y., 6/23/55; Lakenheath, England, 8/13/56; Norfolk, Va., 8/30/57; RB-47 case, 9/19/57; Beverly, Mass., 4/22/66; Donnybrook, N.D., 8/19/66; Haynesville, La., 12/30/66; Joplin, Mo., 1/13/67; Colorado Springs, Colo., 5/13/67.

Some examples of UFO cases considered explained in the Condon Report for which I would take strong exception to the argumentation presented and would regard as both unexplained and of strong scientific interest: Flagstaff, Ariz., 5/20/50; Washington, D.C., 7/19/52; Bellefontaine, O., 8/1/52; Haneda AFB, Japan, 8/5/52; Gulf of Mexico, 12/6/52; Odessa, Wash., 12/10/52; Continental Divide, N.M., 1/26/53; Seven Isles, Quebec, 6/29/54; Niagara Falls, N.Y., 7/25/57; Kirtland AFB, N.M., 11/4/57; Gulf of Mexico, 11/5/57; Peru, 12/30/66; Holloman AFB, 3/2/67; Kincheloe AFB, 9/11/67; Vandenberg AFB, 10/6/67; Milledgeville, Ga., 10/20/67.

(to be continued)

This society has been in direct contact with professional scientists who have shown keen interest in the UFO problem. In the future we shall publish excerpts from various scientific papers, which have been presented by scientists, including the personal lecture notes of Professor Hermann Oberth who was co-designer of the V2 rocket and who taught rocketry to Wernher von Braun. Oberth was one of the first top scientists to recognize the UFO problem.

Future bulletins will continue the above paper by Prof. McDonald and will publish highlights of papers presented at the Hearings before the Committee on Science and Astronautics U.S. House of

Representatives on July 29, 1968.

(continuing) UFO OCCUPANTS SEEN NEAR HOSPITAL

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As she watched with intense curiosity, yet completely unfrightened -- "I never felt so peaceful in all my life. I wish I could have talked to them" -- she became aware of seeing more of the interior of the craft and realized it was tilting. In a moment she could see to a point just below their knees and noticed they were standing in front of what looked like stools.

"They looked like fine, tall, well-built men," she said. "They were dressed in tight-fitting suits of the same material that covered their heads but their hands were bare and I noticed how human they looked. Their flesh seemed just like ours."

Intrigued as she was by the appearance of the two figures, Miss Kendall found her interest mainly centred on what looked like an instrument panel facing the one in front. One reason for this, she thought, was that she comes from a family of racing-car enthusiasts and automotive mechanics have always held a special interest for her.

"The man in front was staring at the panel as if something very important was going on, and I wondered if they might have had mechanical trouble," she said. "I even thought they might have landed on the roof of the hospital and then had trouble taking off."

She described the panel as a very large one, taking up almost half the interior of the object and reaching nearly to the top of the dome. The instruments, if that is what they were, seemed to be inset in the chrome-like metal of the panel and there was a variety of sizes.

The total sight was so absorbing that at first Miss Kendall's thoughts were lost to everything else, and for a moment she forgot Mrs. Wilson was in the same room.

"Then when I did think of it, I guess I hesitated," she explained. "I felt I mustn't make a noise or do anything that would break the trend of what was happening."

At this point, almost as if her thoughts were being read, she saw the figure in the rear turn slowly and face squarely in her direction.

"He seemed to look right at me but I couldn't see his face. It was covered by a darkish material that looked softer than the rest of his suit. I'm sure he saw me because then he touched the other man on the back."

Miss Kendall said that what followed, again possibly because of her interest in mechanics, made a sharper impression on her than anything else in the entire incident.

"When the man in back did this, the one in front reached down and took hold of something like a lever beside him. I'll never forget how deliberately he did it. He pushed it back and forth and the saucer, or whatever you'd call it, started to circle slowly, still close to the building, in an anticlockwise direction."

The motion seemed to break the spell for Miss Kendall, for then she remembered Mrs. Wilson was there and called her over.

(to be concluded)

NOTICES TO MEMBERS

OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING:

The October General Meeting will be held on Friday evening, October 8th., at 8.00 p.m., in The Theatrette, Lower Ground Level, National Mutual Centre, 447 Collins Street, Melbourne.

Feature of the evening will be the screening of the films "Apollo 9" and "Apollo 12" which have been kindly made available by courtesy of the United States Embassy.

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday evening, November 12th., at 8.00 p.m., in the National Mutual Centre, 447 Collins Street.

Elections for Committee will be held at this meeting and the offices of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and four committeemen will be required to be filled. Nominations for office, signed by the candidate and proposer, should be mailed to reach the Secretary at P.O. Box 43, Moorabbin 3189, by not later than 12 noon, Friday 29th October.

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UFO SYMPOSIUM BOOKLET AVAILABLE:

The Aerial Phenomena Research Organisation (APRO) of 3910 East Kleindale Road, Tucson, Arizona, U.S.A. is offering for sale printed transcripts of the Eastern and Western UFO Symposiums which were recently sponsored by APRO.

These publications contain important and up-to-date information on UFOs, and the price is stated to be "minimal".

All enquiries can be made to APRO at the above address.
